

TO THE COMMITTEE ON EXPENDITURES IN THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen of the Committee:

I am speaking to you as the representative of the Reserve Officers of the Naval Services - better known perhaps as RONS - an organization with a membership of over thirty-six thousand reserve officers of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. Reserve officers, a greater part of whom have now resumed their places in civil life in their home community, are vitally interested in this proposed unification of the armed forces. Most of them left positions of standing in their chosen profession or occupation to serve in the Naval Services for periods ranging from two to six or more years. Their number provided approximately 90% of the officers to the Naval Services in World War II and their activity touched upon every function of that tremendous wartime organization.

No group in the country today has a better grasp, a more thorough understanding, a more intelligent approach to the underlying causes which impel unification of our armed forces than these Reserve Officers, everyone of whom is subject to recall in any national emergency. Perhaps no group can more dispassionately weigh the pros and cons of unification than such a one.

12 June 1947. EKW
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

On the CBS program "Open Hearing," Senators Leverett Saltonstall (R., Mass.), and Edward V. Robertson, (R., Wyo.), debated the subject of unification of the armed forces at 10:30 P.M., Tuesday 10 June 1947.

In his opening statement, Senator Robertson declared that "To insure our national security, there must be a Central Intelligence Agency, presided over by an appointed civilian, and must be responsible to the National Security Council and its Chairman."

Senator Saltonstall, in his opening statement, stated that, "We must have a professionally trained, world-wide intelligence force."

Toward the end of the program, Winston Burdett -- the moderator -- said, "I would like to bring up another point in the bill. It sets up a Central Intelligence Agency, and provides that a military man may be appointed as Director. Senator Robertson, what do you think of that?"

ROBERTSON: I feel that that position as head of the Central Intelligence Agency -- in fact I feel that it is most important that this position should be filled by a civilian. That Agency has all the potentialities of an American Gestapo; and such an organization, controlled by a military man, would be in possession of untold power which we could not properly place in the hands of our military.

SALTONSTALL: I agree with Senator Robertson that ultimately it should be in the hands of a civilian. It should be a life-time job, just like Mr. Hoover of the F.B.I. has made a life career of his job. But at the moment, it would undoubtedly be difficult to get such a man properly to fill that position, because these positions have been in the hands of the military. They are experienced. I agree that ultimately it should be a civilian; and the present military man, I believe, has agreed to give up his status as an Admiral.